

# CORRESPONDENCE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE EUGENICS REVIEW.

School of Social Studies,  
56, Bedford Street,

15th October, 1923.

Sir,

On page 509 of the October number of the EUGENICS REVIEW, Professor E. W. MacBride writes as follows: "Carr-Saunders . . . maintains that there is an 'automatic' regulation of population to food supply, and that therefore it is superfluous to advocate birth-control." This is a complete mis-statement of facts. I do not propose to weary you with an account of my views. It is perhaps sufficient to say, in order to shew that Professor MacBride is mistaken, that I have for some time been a member of both the societies which advocate birth-control. On the same page Professor MacBride refers to me in the following terms: "Carr-Saunders, whose book is largely an attempt to twist well known biological facts into a shape more acceptable to Labour Socialism." Again I do not propose to trouble you with my political views, but I may point out that since I am not a member of any Labour or Socialist party, and have never supported any Labour or Socialist party by writing, speaking, or voting in their favour, it is not apparent what motive I should have in "twisting facts" to make them acceptable to such parties even if it were my habit to "twist facts."

Yours truly,

A. M. CARR-SAUNDERS.

I am sorry that Prof. Carr-Saunders considers that the phrase "twist well-known biological facts" conveys an unpleasant insinuation. I shall therefore withdraw it and substitute for it the statement that his book "contains special pleading on behalf of a doctrine which is in favour with the Labour Socialist party." That is my deliberate judgment on the book, as a biologist and as a student of racial problems of older date than even Prof. Carr-Saunders. It could be justified by numerous selections from the final chapters—cf., page 467. "In other words, supposing that the ancestors of those composing the upper social classes to have been distinguished by desirable mental qualities, their descendants *to whose disappearance so much is attributed* are not distinguished by a similar superiority on the average." Again, page 472, "Success alone cannot be taken as an indication of the value of the characters exhibited by the successful." With reference to my statement that Prof. Carr-Saunders maintained that there was an automatic regulation of population to food supply, I may quote page 477, "In the past the solution (of the quantitative problem) has been consciously or semi-consciously achieved," and again, page 476, "these factors (which incidentally restrict increase) take the form of abortion, infanticide and prolonged absence from intercourse." The inference to be drawn is that mankind left alone, will adopt suitable means to reduce their numbers to the optimal figure. As a comment on this reasoning I need only mention the fact that in the 13th and 14th centuries there were in England seven famines per century!

E. W. MACBRIDE.

London, November, 1923.